106TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

S. 1515

To amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

August 5, 1999

Mr. Hatch (for himself, Mr. Daschle, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Bingaman, and Mr. Domenici) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, and for other purposes.

- 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
- 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
- 3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
- 4 This Act may be cited as the "Radiation Exposure
- 5 Compensation Act Amendments of 1999".
- 6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.
- 7 Congress finds that—
- 8 (1) the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act
- 9 (42 U.S.C. 2210 note) recognized the responsibility
- of the Federal Government to compensate individ-

- uals who were harmed by the mining of radioactive
 materials or fallout from nuclear arms testing;
- 3 (2) a congressional oversight hearing conducted 4 by the Committee on Labor and Human Resources 5 of the Senate demonstrated that since enactment of 6 the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 7 U.S.C. 2210 note), regulatory burdens have made it 8 too difficult for some deserving individuals to be 9 fairly and efficiently compensated;
 - (3) reports of the Atomic Energy Commission and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health testify to the need to extend eligibility to States in which the Federal Government sponsored uranium mining and milling from 1941 through 1971;
 - (4) scientific data resulting from the enactment of the Radiation Exposed Veterans Compensation Act of 1988 (38 U.S.C. 101 note), and obtained from the Committee on the Biological Effects of Ionizing Radiations, and the President's Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments provide medical validation for the extension of compensable radiogenic pathologies;
 - (5) above-ground uranium miners, millers and individuals who transported ore should be fairly

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

compensated, in a manner similar to that provided

- for underground uranium miners, in cases in which those individuals suffered disease or resultant death, associated with radiation exposure, due to the failure
- 5 of the Federal Government to warn and otherwise
- 6 help protect citizens from the health hazards ad-
- 7 dressed by the Radiation Exposure Compensation
- 8 Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 2210 note); and
- 9 (6) it should be the responsibility of the Federal 10 Government in partnership with State and local gov-11 ernments and appropriate healthcare organizations, 12 to initiate and support programs designed for the 13 detection. prevention and education early 14 radiogenic diseases in approved States to aid the 15 thousands of individuals adversely affected by the 16 mining of uranium and the testing of nuclear weap-
- 18 SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE RADIATION EXPOSURE COM-

ons for the Nation's weapons arsenal.

- 19 PENSATION ACT.
- 20 (a) Claims Relating to Atmospheric Nuclear
- 21 Testing.—Section 4(a)(1) of the Radiation Exposure
- 22 Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note) is amended to
- 23 read as follows:

17

1

24 "(1) Claims relating to Leukemia.—

1	"(A) In general.—An individual de-
2	scribed in this subparagraph shall receive an
3	amount specified in subparagraph (B) if the
4	conditions described in subparagraph (C) are
5	met. An individual referred to in the preceding
6	sentence is an individual who—
7	"(i)(I) was physically present in an af-
8	fected area for a period of at least 1 year
9	during the period beginning on January
10	21, 1951, and ending on October 31, 1958;
11	"(II) was physically present in the af-
12	fected area for the period beginning on
13	June 30, 1962, and ending on July 31,
14	1962; or
15	"(III) participated onsite in a test in-
16	volving the atmospheric detonation of a
17	nuclear device; and
18	"(ii) submits written documentation
19	that such individual developed leukemia—
20	"(I) after the applicable period of
21	physical presence described in sub-
22	clause (I) or (II) of clause (i) or on-
23	site participation described in clause
24	(i)(III) (as the case may be); and

1	"(II) more that 2 years after
2	first exposure to fallout.
3	"(B) Amounts.—If the conditions de-
4	scribed in subparagraph (C) are met, an
5	individual—
6	"(i) who is described in subclause (I)
7	or (II) of subparagraph (A)(i) shall receive
8	\$50,000; or
9	"(ii) who is described in subclause
10	(III) of subparagraph (A)(i) shall receive
11	\$75,000.
12	"(C) Conditions.—The conditions de-
13	scribed in this subparagraph are as follows:
14	"(i) Initial exposure occurred prior to
15	age 21.
16	"(ii) The claim for a payment under
17	subparagraph (B) is filed with the Attor-
18	ney General by or on behalf of the indi-
19	vidual.
20	"(iii) The Attorney General deter-
21	mines, in accordance with section 6, that
22	the claim meets the requirements of this
23	Act.".

1	(b) Definitions.—Section 4(b) of the Radiation Ex
2	posure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note) is
3	amended—
4	(1) in paragraph (1)—
5	(A) in subparagraph (A) by inserting
6	"Wayne, San Juan," after "Millard,"; and
7	(B) by amending subparagraph (C) to reac
8	as follows:
9	"(C) in the State of Arizona, the counties
10	of Coconino, Yavapai, Navajo, Apache, and
11	Gila; and"; and
12	(2) in paragraph (2)—
13	(A) by striking "the onset of the disease
14	was between 2 and 30 years of first exposure,'
15	and inserting "the onset of the disease was a
16	least 2 years after first exposure, lung cancer
17	(other than in situ lung cancer that is discov
18	ered during or after a post-mortem exam),";
19	(B) by striking "(provided initial exposure
20	occurred by the age of 20)" after "thyroid";
21	(C) by inserting "male or" before "female
22	breast";
23	(D) by striking "(provided initial exposure
24	occurred prior to age 40)" after "female
25	breast";

1	(E) by striking "(provided low alcohol con-
2	sumption and not a heavy smoker)" after
3	"esophagus";
4	(F) by striking "(provided initial exposure
5	occurred before age 30)" after "stomach";
6	(G) by striking "(provided not a heavy
7	smoker)" after "pharynx";
8	(H) by striking "(provided not a heavy
9	smoker and low coffee consumption)" after
10	"pancreas"; and
11	(I) by inserting "salivary gland, urinary
12	bladder, brain, colon, ovary," after "gall blad-
13	der,".
14	(c) Claims Relating to Uranium Mining.—
15	(1) In general.—Section 5(a) of the Radi-
16	ation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210
17	note) is amended to read as follows:
18	"(a) Eligibility of Individuals.—
19	"(1) In general.—An individual shall receive
20	\$100,000 for a claim made under this Act if—
21	"(A) that individual—
22	"(i) was employed in a uranium mine
23	or uranium mill (including any individual
24	who was employed in the transport of ura-
25	nium ore or vanadium-uranium ore from

1	such mine or mill) located in Colorado,
2	New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming, South
3	Dakota, Washington, Utah, Idaho, North
4	Dakota, Oregon, and Texas at any time
5	during the period beginning on January 1,
6	1942, and ending on December 31, 1971;
7	and
8	"(ii)(I) was a miner exposed to 40 or
9	more working level months of radiation
10	and submits written medical documenta-
11	tion that the individual, after that expo-
12	sure, developed lung cancer or a nonmalig-
13	nant respiratory disease; or
14	"(II) was a miller or ore transporter
15	who worked for at least 1 year during the
16	period described under clause (i) and sub-
17	mits written medical documentation that
18	the individual, after that exposure, devel-
19	oped lung cancer or a nonmalignant res-
20	piratory disease;
21	"(B) the claim for that payment is filed
22	with the Attorney General by or on behalf of
23	that individual; and

1	"(C) the Attorney General determines, in
2	accordance with section 6, that the claim meets
3	the requirements of this Act.
4	"(2) Inclusion of additional states.—
5	Paragraph (1)(A)(i) shall apply to a State, in addi-
6	tion to the States named under such clause, if—
7	"(A) an Atomic Energy Commission ura-
8	nium mine was operated in such State at any
9	time during the period beginning on January 1,
10	1942, and ending on December 31, 1971;
11	"(B) the State submits an application to
12	the Department of Justice to include such
13	State; and
14	"(C) the Attorney General makes a deter-
15	mination to include such State.
16	"(3) Payment requirement.—Each payment
17	under this section may be made only in accordance
18	with section 6.".
19	(2) Definitions.—Section 5(b) of the Radi-
20	ation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210
21	note) is amended—
22	(A) in paragraph (3)—
23	(i) by striking "and" before
24	"corpulmonale":

1	(ii) by striking "; and if the claim-
2	ant," and all that follows through the end
3	of the paragraph and inserting ", silicosis,
4	and pneumoconiosis"; and
5	(iii) by striking "and" at the end of
6	the paragraph;
7	(B) by striking the period at the end of
8	paragraph (4) and inserting a semicolon; and
9	(C) by adding at the end the following:
10	"(5) the term 'written medical documentation'
11	for purposes of proving a nonmalignant respiratory
12	disease or lung cancer means, in any case in which
13	the claimant is living—
14	"(A)(i) an arterial blood gas study; or
15	"(ii) a written diagnosis by a physician
16	meeting the requirements of subsection $(c)(1)$;
17	and
18	"(B)(i) a chest x-ray administered in ac-
19	cordance with standard techniques and the in-
20	terpretive reports of a maximum of 2 National
21	Institute of Occupational Health and Safety
22	certified 'B' readers classifying the existence of
23	the nonmalignant respiratory disease of cat-
24	egory 1/0 or higher according to a 1989 report

1	of the International Labor Office (known as the
2	'ILO'), or subsequent revisions;
3	"(ii) high resolution computed tomography
4	scans (commonly known as 'HRCT scans') (in-
5	cluding computer assisted tomography scans
6	(commonly known as 'CAT scans'), magnetic
7	resonance imaging scans (commonly known as
8	'MRI scans'), and positron emission tomog-
9	raphy scans (commonly known as 'PET scans'))
10	and interpretive reports of such scans;
11	"(iii) pathology reports of tissue biopsies;
12	or
13	"(iv) pulmonary function tests indicating
14	restrictive lung function, as defined by the
15	American Thoracic Society;
16	"(6) the term 'lung cancer'—
17	"(A) means any physiological condition of
18	the lung, trachea, or bronchus that is recog-
19	nized as lung cancer by the National Cancer In-
20	stitute; and
21	"(B) includes in situ lung cancers;
22	"(7) the term 'uranium mine' means any under-
23	ground excavation, including 'dog holes', as well as
24	open pit, strip, rim, surface, or other aboveground

1	mines, where uranium ore or vanadium-uranium ore
2	was mined or otherwise extracted; and
3	"(8) the term 'uranium mill' includes milling
4	operations involving the processing of uranium ore
5	or vanadium-uranium ore, including both carbonate
6	and acid leach plants.".
7	(3) Written documentation.—Section 5 of
8	the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42
9	U.S.C. 2210 note) is amended by adding at the end
10	the following:
11	"(c) Written Documentation.—
12	"(1) Diagnosis alternative to arterial
13	BLOOD GAS STUDY.—
14	"(A) In general.—For purposes of this
15	Act, the written diagnosis and the accom-
16	panying interpretive reports described in sub-
17	section (b)(5)(A) shall—
18	"(i) be considered to be conclusive;
19	and
20	"(ii) be subject to a fair and random
21	audit procedure established by the Attor-
22	ney General.
23	"(B) CERTAIN WRITTEN DIAGNOSES.—
24	"(i) In general.—For purposes of
25	this Act. a written diagnosis made by a

1	physician described under clause (ii) of a
2	nonmalignant pulmonary disease or lung
3	cancer of a claimant that is accompanied
4	by written documentation shall be consid-
5	ered to be conclusive evidence of that dis-
6	ease.
7	"(ii) Description of Physicians.—
8	A physician referred to under clause (i) is
9	a physician who—
10	"(I) is employed by the Indian
11	Health Service or the Department of
12	Veterans Affairs; or
13	"(II) is a board certified physi-
14	cian; and
15	"(III) has a documented ongoing
16	physician patient relationship with the
17	claimant.
18	"(2) Chest X-rays.—
19	"(A) In general.—For purposes of this
20	Act, a chest x-ray and the accompanying inter-
21	pretive reports described in subsection
22	(b)(5)(B) shall—
23	"(i) be considered to be conclusive:
24	and

1	"(ii) be subject to a fair and random
2	audit procedure established by the Attor-
3	ney General.
4	"(B) CERTAIN WRITTEN DIAGNOSES.—
5	"(i) In general.—For purposes of
6	this Act, a written diagnosis made by a
7	physician described in clause (ii) of a non-
8	malignant pulmonary disease or lung can-
9	cer of a claimant that is accompanied by
10	written documentation that meets the defi-
11	nition of that term under subsection (b)(5)
12	shall be considered to be conclusive evi-
13	dence of that disease.
14	"(ii) Description of Physicians.—
15	A physician referred to under clause (i) is
16	a physician who—
17	"(I) is employed by—
18	"(aa) the Indian Health
19	Service; or
20	"(bb) the Department of
21	Veterans Affairs; and
22	"(II) has a documented ongoing
23	physician patient relationship with the
24	claimant.".
25	(d) DETERMINATION AND PAYMENT OF CLAIMS —

- 1 (1) FILING PROCEDURES.—Section 6(a) of the 2 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 3 2210 note) is amended by adding at the end the fol-4 lowing: "In establishing procedures under this sub-5 section, the Attorney General shall take into account 6 and make allowances for the law, tradition, and cus-7 toms of Indian tribes (as that term is defined in sec-8 tion 5(b)) and members of Indian tribes, to the max-9 imum extent practicable.".
 - (2) Determination and payment of claims, Generally.—Section 6(b)(1) of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note) is amended by adding at the end the following: "All reasonable doubt with regard to whether a claim meets the requirements of this Act shall be resolved in favor of the claimant.".
 - (3) Offset for Certain Payments.—Section 6(c)(2)(B) of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note) is amended—
- 20 (A) in clause (i), by inserting "(other than 21 a claim for workers' compensation)" after 22 "claim"; and
- 23 (B) in clause (ii), by striking "Federal 24 Government" and inserting "Department of 25 Veterans Affairs".

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

1	(4) Application of native american law to
2	CLAIMS.—Section 6(c)(4) of the Radiation Exposure
3	Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note) is amend-
4	ed by adding at the end the following:
5	"(D) APPLICATION OF NATIVE AMERICAN
6	LAW.—In determining those individuals eligible
7	to receive compensation by virtue of marriage,
8	relationship, or survivorship, such determina-
9	tion shall take into consideration and give effect
10	to established law, tradition, and custom of the
11	particular affected Indian tribe.".
12	(5) ACTION ON CLAIMS.—Section 6(d) of the
13	Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C.
14	2210 note) is amended—
15	(A) by inserting "(1) IN GENERAL.—" be-
16	fore "The Attorney General";
17	(B) by inserting at the end the following:
18	"For purposes of determining when the 12-
19	month period ends, a claim under this Act shall
20	be deemed filed as of the date of its receipt by
21	the Attorney General. In the event of the denial
22	of a claim, the claimant shall be permitted a
23	reasonable period in which to seek administra-
24	tive review of the denial by the Attorney Gen-

eral. The Attorney General shall make a final

1	determination with respect to any administra-
2	tive review within 90 days after the receipt of
3	the claimant's request for such review. In the
4	event the Attorney General fails to render a de-
5	termination within 12 months after the date of
6	the receipt of such request, the claim shall be
7	deemed awarded as a matter of law and paid.";
8	and
9	(C) by adding at the end the following:
10	"(2) Additional information.—The Attor-
11	ney General may request from any claimant under
12	this Act, or from any individual or entity on behalf
13	of any such claimant, any reasonable additional in-
14	formation or documentation necessary to complete
15	the determination on the claim in accordance with
16	the procedures established under subsection (a).
17	"(3) Treatment of Period Associated with
18	REQUEST.—
19	"(A) In General.—The period described
20	in subparagraph (B) shall not apply to the 12-
21	month limitation under paragraph (1).
22	"(B) Period.—The period described in
23	this subparagraph is the period—
24	"(i) beginning on the date on which
25	the Attorney General makes a request for

1	additional information or documentation
2	under paragraph (2); and
3	"(ii) ending on the date on which the
4	claimant or individual or entity acting on
5	behalf of that claimant submits that infor-
6	mation or documentation or informs the
7	Attorney General that it is not possible to
8	provide that information or that the claim-
9	ant or individual or entity will not provide
10	that information.
11	"(4) Payment within 6 weeks.—The Attor-
12	ney General shall ensure that an approved claim is
13	paid not later than 6 weeks after the date on which
14	such claim is approved.
15	"(5) Native American considerations.—
16	Any procedures under this subsection shall take into
17	consideration and incorporate, to the fullest extent
18	feasible, Native American law, tradition, and custom
19	with respect to the submission and processing of
20	claims by Native Americans.".
21	(e) Regulations.—
22	(1) In General.—Section 6(i) of the Radiation
23	Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note)
24	is amended by adding at the end the following: "Not

later than 180 days after the date of enactment of

1 the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amend-2 ments of 1999, the Attorney General shall issue re-3 vised regulations to carry out this Act.". 4 (2) Affidavits.— (A) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General 6 shall take such action as may be necessary to 7 ensure that the procedures established by the 8 Attorney General under section 6 of the Radi-9 ation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 10 2210 note) provide that, in addition to any 11 other material that may be used to substantiate 12 employment history for purposes of determining 13 working level months, an individual filing a 14 claim under those procedures may make such a 15 substantiation by means of an affidavit de-16 scribed in subparagraph (B). 17 (B) Affidavits.—An affidavit referred to 18 under subparagraph (A) is an affidavit— 19 (i) that meets such requirements as 20 the Attorney General may establish; and (ii) is made by a person other than 21

the individual filing the claim that attests

to the employment history of the claimant.

22

1	(f) Limitations on Claims.—Section 8 of the Radi-
2	ation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note)
3	is amended—
4	(1) by inserting "(a) In General.—" before
5	"A claim"; and
6	(2) by adding at the end the following:
7	"(b) RESUBMITTAL OF CLAIMS.—After the date of
8	enactment of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act
9	Amendments of 1999, any claimant who has been denied
10	compensation under this Act may resubmit a claim for
11	consideration by the Attorney General in accordance with
12	this Act not more than 3 times. Any resubmittal made
13	before the date of enactment of the Radiation Exposure
14	Compensation Act Amendments of 1999 shall not be ap-
15	plied to the limitation under the preceding sentence.".
16	(g) Extension of Claims and Fund.—
17	(1) Extension of claims.—Section 8 of the
18	Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C.
19	2210 note) is amended by striking "20 years after
20	the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting
21	"22 years after the date of enactment of the Radi-
22	ation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of
23	1999".
24	(2) Extension of fund.—Section 3(d) of the
25	Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C.

1	2210 note) is amended in the first sentence by strik
2	ing "date of the enactment of this Act" and insert
3	ing "date of enactment of the Radiation Exposure
4	Compensation Act Amendments of 1999".
5	(h) Attorney Fees Limitations.—Section 9 of the
6	Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210
7	note) is amended in the first sentence by striking "10 per
8	centum" and inserting "2 percent".
9	(i) GAO Reports.—
10	(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months
11	after the date of enactment of this Act, and every
12	18 months thereafter, the General Accounting Office
13	shall submit a report to Congress containing a de
14	tailed accounting of the administration of the Radi
15	ation Exposure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210
16	note) by the Department of Justice.
17	(2) Contents.—Each report submitted under
18	this subsection shall include an analysis of—
19	(A) claims, awards, and administrative
20	costs under the Radiation Exposure Compensa
21	tion Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note); and
22	(B) the budget of the Department of Jus
23	tice relating to such Act.

1	SEC. 4. ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM OF GRANTS TO
2	STATES FOR EDUCATION, PREVENTION, AND
3	EARLY DETECTION OF RADIOGENIC CAN-
4	CERS AND DISEASES.
5	Subpart I of part C of title IV of the Public Health
6	Service Act (42 U.S.C. 285 et seq.) is amended by adding
7	at the end the following:
8	"SEC. 417C. GRANTS FOR EDUCATION, PREVENTION, AND
9	EARLY DETECTION OF RADIOGENIC CAN-
10	CERS AND DISEASES.
11	"(a) Definition.—In this section the term 'entity
12	means any—
13	"(1) National Cancer Institute-designated can-
14	cer center;
15	"(2) Department of Veterans Affairs hospital or
16	medical center;
17	"(3) Federally Qualified Health Center, com-
18	munity health center, or hospital;
19	"(4) agency of any State or local government,
20	including any State department of health; or
21	"(5) nonprofit organization.
22	"(b) In General.—The Secretary, acting through
23	the Administrator of the Health Resources and Services
24	Administration in consultation with the Director of the
25	National Institutes of Health and the Director of the In-

- 1 dian Health Service, may make competitive grants to any2 entity for the purpose of carrying out programs to—
- 3 "(1) screen individuals described under section
- 4 4(a)(1)(A)(i) or 5(a)(1)(A) of the Radiation Expo-
- 5 sure Compensation Act (42 U.S.C. 2210 note) for
- 6 cancer as a preventative health measure;
- 7 "(2) provide appropriate referrals for medical
- 8 treatment of individuals screened under paragraph
- 9 (1) and to ensure, to the extent practicable, the pro-
- vision of appropriate follow-up services;
- 11 "(3) develop and disseminate public information
- and education programs for the detection, preven-
- tion, and treatment of radiogenic cancers and dis-
- eases; and
- 15 "(4) facilitate putative applicants in the docu-
- mentation of claims as described in section 5(a) of
- the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (42
- 18 U.S.C. 2210 note).
- 19 "(c) Indian Health Service.—The programs
- 20 under subsection (a) shall include programs provided
- 21 through the Indian Health Service or through tribal con-
- 22 tracts, compacts, grants, or cooperative agreements with
- 23 the Indian Health Service and which are determined ap-
- 24 propriate to raising the health status of Indians.

- 1 "(d) Grant and Contract Authority.—Entities
- 2 receiving a grant under subsection (b) may expend the
- 3 grant to carry out the purpose described in such sub-
- 4 section.
- 5 "(e) HEALTH COVERAGE UNAFFECTED.—Nothing in
- 6 this section shall be construed to affect any coverage obli-
- 7 gation of a governmental or private health plan or pro-
- 8 gram relating to an individual referred to under subsection
- 9 (b)(1).
- 10 "(f) Report to Congress.—Beginning on October
- 11 1 of the year following the date on which amounts are
- 12 first appropriated to carry out this section and annually
- 13 on each October 1 thereafter, the Secretary shall submit
- 14 a report to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Com-
- 15 mittee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the
- 16 Senate and to the Committee on the Judiciary and the
- 17 Committee on Commerce of the House of Representatives.
- 18 Each report shall summarize the expenditures and pro-
- 19 grams funded under this section as the Secretary deter-
- 20 mines to be appropriate.
- 21 "(g) Authorization of Appropriations.—There
- 22 are authorized to be appropriated for the purpose of car-
- 23 rying out this section \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 1999

- 1 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal
- 2~ years 2000 through 2009.".

 \bigcirc